

Environmental Service Delivery

Staff Survey Follow- Up Report & Recommendations

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INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

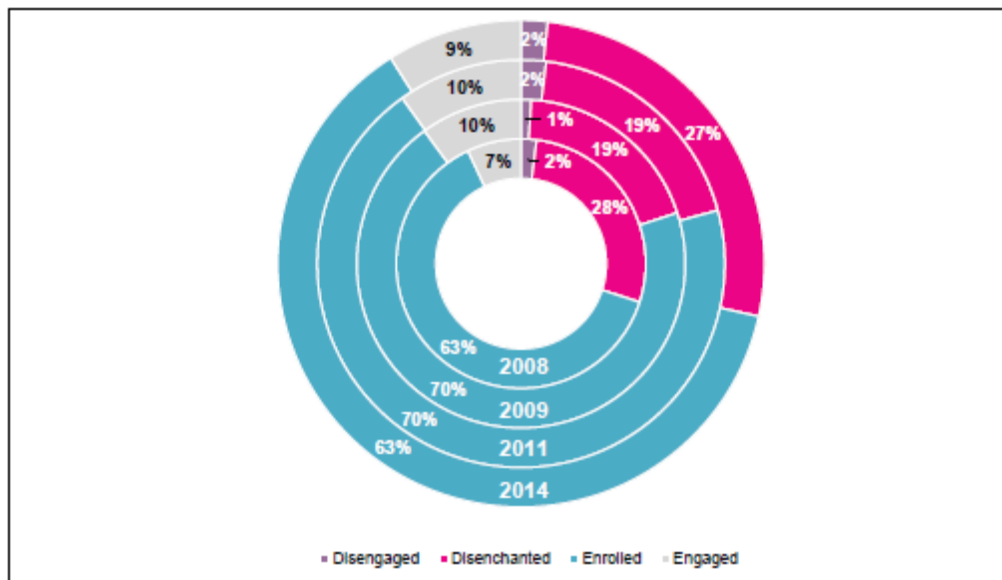
The June 2014 Harrow Council Employee Survey forms part of the continuous programme of engagement and feedback with staff at Harrow Council. The survey which was responded to by 47% of staff across the Council but by only 21% of Environmental Service Delivery colleagues was held against a challenging backdrop including: a multi-phased implementation of terms and conditions changes including a 1% pay reduction in 2013/14; pension changes in 2014 which have increased contribution rates; IT challenges affecting getting the job done; further expectations of changes in the Council on the basis of further savings that are needed; and an uncertain period with various changes in both the administration and management including public allegations of institutional racism in the Council.

The responses that were provided by Environment & Enterprise (E&E) Directorate staff for the Staff Survey was at the period when restructuring of the Directorate was recently completed with a new organisational, management and operating structure in place, although with significant vacancies at Team Leader / operational level in some teams and undelivered new IT hardware and software.

1.2 Need

The 2014 Staff Survey for Harrow Council identified that reported staff engagement levels has been continuously on the decline and have now fallen to 2008 levels as shown in Fig 1.1.

Figure 1.1 Harrow Council Overall Organisation Engagement Levels



The 2014 E&E Directorate engagement score indicated that it was below the Council average as shown in Figure 1.2.

Figure 1.2 Overall Engagement Scores by Directorate

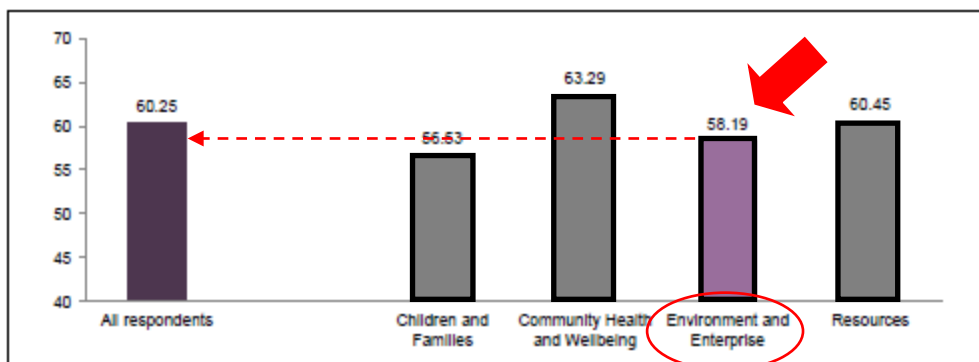
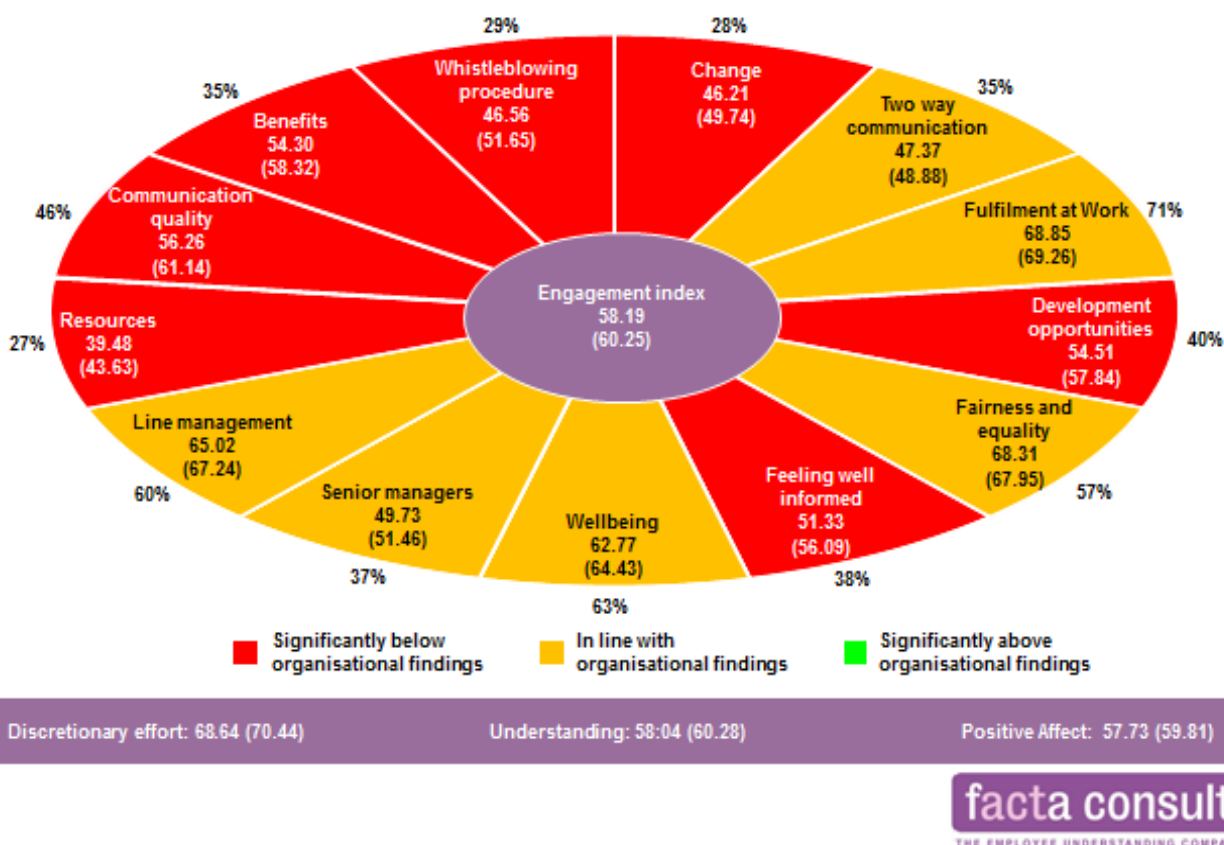


Figure 1.3 shows the breakdown of survey results for E&E and identifies themes where E&E score fell significantly below the Council average. It should be noted that there was no survey theme where E&E scored above the Council average.

Figure 1.3 2014 Staff Survey Results for E&E Directorate



Within E&E, the survey results show that despite the low response rate, the Environment Service Delivery (ESD) staff provided a higher than average level of dissatisfaction response to most themes. The Spider-web chart plotting the ESD score against the National Benchmark and Harrow Total scores is attached in Appendix A. The Directorate was concerned with this outcome and, as a matter of priority, needed to better understand the reasons for such poor responses and lack of feedback to identify opportunities for improvement.

Unhappy and discontented staff could lead to lowering staff retention rates, increased absenteeism, risks to productivity, customer relations, and organisational effectiveness. However, when staff survey results are acted on by Management, it can help reinforce to employees that their input is valued by the organisation which in turn can help improve morale and loyalty. It is for this reason that ESD has commissioned the follow-up survey of ESD staff to verify and to seek clarification on responses provided in the Staff Survey.

1.3 Harrow's vision

It is essential that every part of Harrow's community including employees of Harrow Council deliver the services and feel their views and opinions are being heard in deciding local priorities and that they are empowered to take action and help with service delivery where appropriate. The Council recognises the importance of getting these people involved in the decision making process which affects their every day lives. This ethos fits with the Council's vision "**Working together to make a difference for Harrow**" and the four Council priorities.

The E&E Service Plan 2014-15 recognises that "*developing our workforce is critical in securing the delivery of better and more efficient customer focussed public services. Our principles are:*

- *To recruit and retain high calibre staff;*
- *To provide relevant and high quality learning and development opportunities;*
- *To encourage staff to take responsibility for their development: and*
- *To plan effectively for future developments."*

1.4 Acknowledgements

The follow-up survey interviews programme was managed by the E&E Policy & Performance Team and interview surveys were undertaken by volunteer staff from the E&E Directorate. The team members were Kevin Ratnasingam, Hanif Islam, Fuad Omar, Tanzina Ferdous, Jon Wilson, Sajni Durve, Bali Rai, David Sklair, Johann Alles, Laura McIntosh, Sonia Parmar, and Victoria Isaacs. The interviews would not have been possible without the support and encouragement to staff to participate in the surveys by the ESD Service Managers; Andy Appleby, Alex Hauck, Mick Wynne, Alan Whiting and Richard Le Brun as well as their Team Leaders. Special thanks to the Waste Team and Harrow Pride for arranging transport for the on-site interviews.

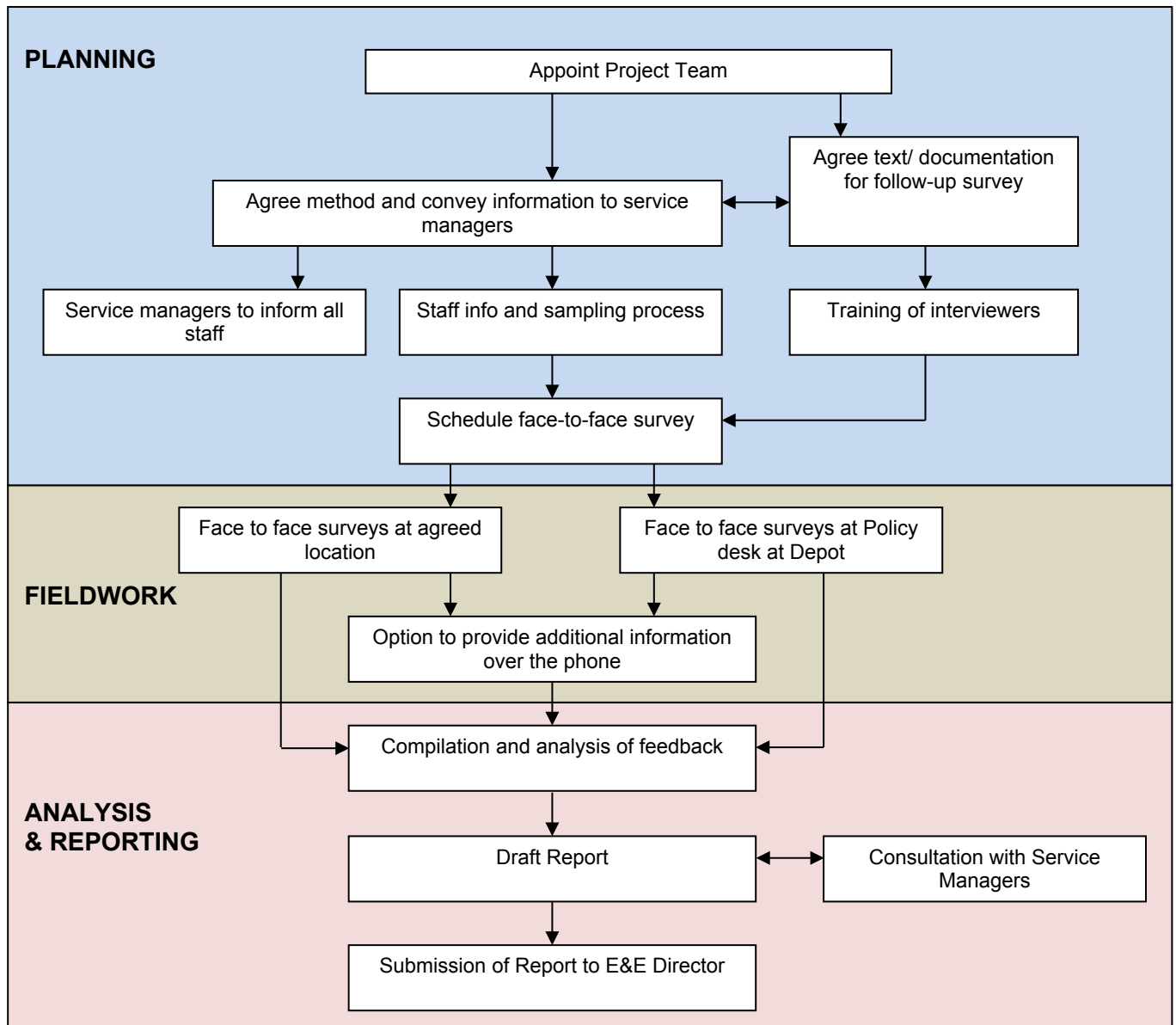
1.5 Report Structure

Chapter 2 discusses the follow-up survey methodology. Chapter 3 discusses the survey results and recommendations. The programme for delivery of the recommendations is set out in Chapter 4.

2. THE INTERVIEW SURVEY PROCESS

2.1 Methodology

The follow-up survey methodology is shown in the flowchart below.



2.2 Development of Survey Content and Questions

The survey questions covered all categories from the main Staff Survey addressing the following themes:

- Two way communications
- Fulfilling work
- Development opportunities
- Fairness & equality
- Feeling well informed
- Wellbeing

- Senior managers
- Line management
- Resources
- Communications
- Appraisals / IPAD

The survey questions were open ended to enable respondees to speak their mind and to provide honest feedback. Each interviewee was asked to provide feedback on selected themes within the 10-15 minutes allowed for each interview. The interviews were structured such that responses were collected on all themes.

A copy of the interview questionnaire is attached in Appendix B.

2.3 The Survey Process

Selection and Training of Interviewers

A range of staff volunteered to conduct the interview surveys. Interviewers were trained for consistency in interviewing and to solicit the right level of responses.

Target Audience

The interviewing team approached as many staff as possible from all the ESD Services to secure feedback.

Face-to-Face Interview Surveys

The face to face surveys were undertaken during work hours at locations which is convenient for staff to minimise disruption to their work programme. The interviews took place at the following locations:

- depot based staff – at the depot
- on-site based staff - at the on-site place of work e.g. park maintenance staff
- drivers – at the start or end of their shift at the depot
- waste services – on the refuse collection vehicles and at the Civic Amenity Site

Where possible, interviews were undertaken in staff groups of no more than 3. Interviewers would ensure that a balanced level of responses is solicited from each person interviewed.

All feedback that was collected was not attributed to, nor recorded as being provided by the person being interviewed. The only identification made on the interview response form was on the job category of the staff interviewed and this is strictly for statistical reporting purposes only.

Survey Programme

The interview surveys were carried out over a 4 week period commencing 6/10/14.

3. SURVEY RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Survey Responses

A total of 77 interview survey sessions were undertaken securing responses from 153 staff from the ESD. This represents 47% of the total 330 staff in the ESD database and has achieved a considerably better proportion of total staff responses in ESD compared to the 2014 Harrow Council Corporate Staff Survey when only 69 (21%) of staff responded. The Service Managers were excluded from the survey which had an average of 2 staff interviewed per interview session.

The breakdown of staff that were interviewed from each ESD Service is summarised in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Staff Interview Breakdown by ESD Service(1)

Service	Waste	Harrow Pride	Parking	EH, TS & PP (1)	Total
No of staff interviewed	50	51	24	28	153
No of staff	114	121	39	56	330
% Staff Interviewed	44%	42%	62%	50%	47%

Note: (1) Environmental Health, Technical Services and Public Protection

3.2 Survey Results

Whilst there was some variation between the responses from staff from the different Services, there were more common high level responses. For this reason, for reporting purposes, the open-ended survey responses were grouped under the following high level topics:

1. Staff Recognition and Appreciation
2. Communication and Engagement
3. IPAD's and Personal Development
4. Personal Well-being & Workload
5. Line Management
6. Senior Management (ESD Director/ Service Manager)
7. Equipment and Facilities

The main feedback is identified for each topic and arranged in descending order together with the recommendations for improvement.

1.0 STAFF RECOGNITION AND APPRECIATION	
Responses	Clarification on responses obtained
<p>67 commented that Council consultations are a tick box exercise and that their views not listened to</p> <p>59 commented that their opinions are not valued</p> <p>26 commented that they were concerned that negative feedback will lead to consequences to that staff member</p>	<p>The Directorate has to demonstrate that all staff feedback is important and is taken into consideration in decision making.</p> <p>The Directorate has to demonstrate to staff that feedback provided is confidential and they are able to respond without fear or favour.</p> <p>Staff need to be convinced that that their views matter and that they have a role in influencing Council decisions.</p>
Recommendations for consideration	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Decisions made by the Council should be clearly explained to staff and that staff should be able to seek clarification on decisions made by the Council. Although consultation responses are prepared, it seems that the format used is not lending itself to be accessible to all Depot based staff. Consideration should be given to providing responses in an appropriately summarised way and making sure that all staff including those without access to email have access to the responses. This applies to Corporate and Service communications 2. EE Staff Engagement Event to be held every 3 months at depot and Civic to enable staff to seek face to face feedback on Council decisions. 	

2.0 COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Responses	Clarification on responses obtained
<p>56 commented that they were only informed of changes and decisions in the Council after it has happened</p> <p>43 expressed their view that staff who are based at the depot are out of touch with events/ actions that are taking place compared to staff who are based at the Civic.</p> <p>52 staff commented that they feel that they are not getting information that is usually made available to Council staff in the Civic.</p> <p>31 commented that they are well informed through email, through the notice boards and leaflets that are distributed to staff.</p>	<p>Notice board messages needs to be updated regularly with the most recent information posted made obvious to staff.</p> <p>Staff who are site-based have less opportunity to get notices either on print or electronically as they spend very limited time at the depot.</p> <p>Site based staff have no computer access and rely on their Line Manager for notices and information</p>

Recommendations for consideration

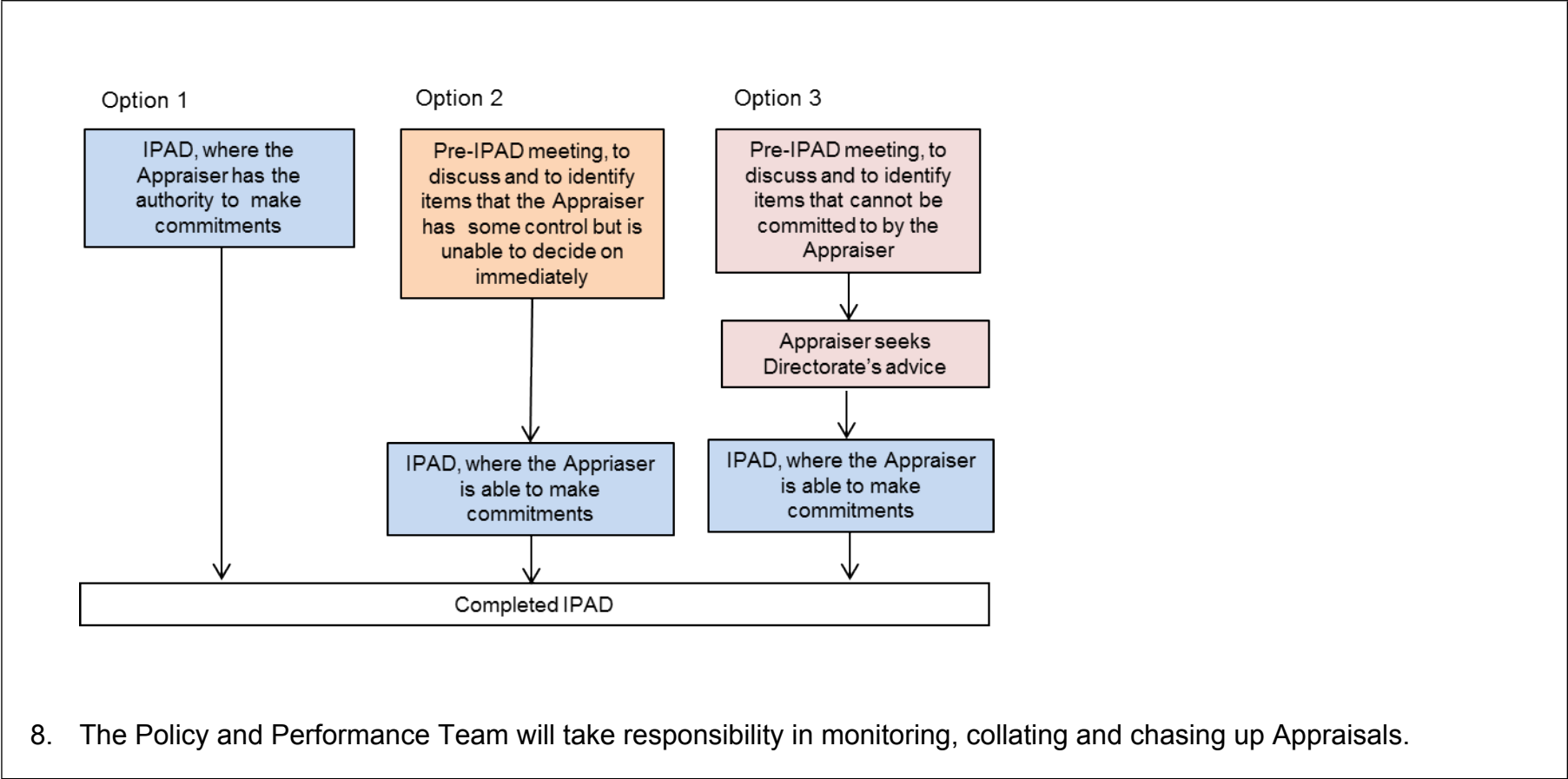
1. The Directorate is to make better use of all communication channels to keep staff updated. This includes regular updating of the notice board by a dedicated member of staff, distributing leaflets to staff for any key messages and making better use of hand-held devices e.g. Bartec, mobile phones, PDAs to provide headlines on a weekly basis so that site staff can be informed by their line managers. The directorate is to work with Corporate Communications to ensure that all communications/ messages are conveyed in a timely manner to all ESD staff based at the depot. Simply stating: Please print for staff without email access is not satisfactory. The responsibility should be to check and ensure the messages are getting to staff. If necessary, simplified summary messages should be created for on site staff with details of where to go for further information.
2. All staff should be provided with computer access which is available for use during depot operation times. This can be through shared computers that are based at the Canteen or a secured alternative location. This can be used by staff to check for information and for information updates. Basic training to use the Hub will be required for some. Corp IT have confirmed that internet access can be made available but with no access to the Hub. Technical Services will maintain a folder of newsletters, policies, procedures etc. which can be accessed online by staff.

3.0 APPRAISAL & PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Responses	Clarification on responses obtained
<p>15 commented that they have had no IPAD done and 31 of having poor IPAD experience.</p> <p>43 commented that the training opportunities are limited or that they are advised that there is lack of funding for training.</p> <p>23 commented that they have benefitted from some form of training provided by the Directorate.</p> <p>34 do not know what training is available or where to look for training opportunities offered by the Directorate</p> <p>11 commented that they felt that skills acquired since undergoing training is not recognised in their remuneration</p> <p>10 commented that Harrow Council has provided them with the opportunity to have career progression</p> <p>8 commented that they had no follow-up performance review or reassessment after under-going training</p>	<p>The Directorate needs to do more to enable staff to fully benefit from their IPADs. Poor Appraisals are demoralising for staff and reflect poorly on the Directorate's commitment on staff well-being and development.</p> <p>Training and development is to be prioritised by the Directorate as part of the work programme and clarity/transparency provided on the programme.</p> <p>Most ESD staff based at the depot do not have access to a computer to keep themselves updated with external and internal training programmes that are available.</p>

Recommendations for consideration

1. The Directorate should introduce Appraisal month in May and October each year where all staff and managers are expected to prioritise IPAD action. This will help raise awareness of the importance of Appraisals as part of the Directorate's staff development and well-being culture. This will be accompanied by a high profile, awareness campaign.
2. Appraisal training needs to be rebranded as a core component of work and responsibility for all staff with supervision responsibility in the Directorate, particularly in ESD. A Directorate-wide programme should be rolled-out to actively inform staff on the Appraisal process and what they should expect from it.
3. The Directorate should appoint an Appraisal Champion who has overall responsibility to monitor that the Appraisals are correctly delivered and to undertake random monitoring of effectiveness.
4. All staff who have Appraisal responsibility should undergo tailored specific training to effectively deliver Appraisals. This training should include recognising and rewarding staff and customizing the process depending on the target group.
5. A review of responsibility to deliver the APPRAISALS and APPRAISAL structure/template is to be undertaken for each member of staff and Appraisals needs to be customised to appropriately meet the needs of staff at different levels of responsibility and by the type of work they do.
6. The Directorate should have a training register available which should be accessible to all staff. Staff should be provided the opportunity to put forward recommendations for training and development for consideration by the Directorate. Staff should be informed on the process of applying for training and this form an integral part of the APPRAISAL. This should be updated and repeated at least every April and June after Appraisals.
7. Managers should be given the option of flexibility to determine how to best deliver the Appraisals depending on circumstance. Only suitably trained and competent staff would be given responsibility for APPRAISALS.



4.0 PERSONAL WELL BEING AND WORKLOAD

Responses	Clarification on responses obtained
<p>No staff raised any issue relating to fairness & equality at the Council.</p> <p>78 commented that either they were overworked or that their team was short-staffed resulting in them being asked to do more work that they would normally do.</p> <p>40 commented that they were unhappy that they work on weekends at same pay</p> <p>35 commented that they feel that staff who are based at the Civic Centre have a poor perception of those based at the depot. This has in some instances affected the working relationship with Civic Central based staff.</p> <p>32 commented that the Council supports their well-being</p> <p>21 commented that they have a good working relationship and/or support from colleagues</p> <p>12 commented that their work achievements are not recognised by their managers</p>	<p>The Directorate needs to do more to demonstrate that staff based at the depot are not disadvantaged, given equal respect and are valued as much as staff based at other Council office locations.</p> <p>The Directorate needs to recognise that staff who work on weekends are sacrificing their weekend time with family and need to be compensated accordingly.</p> <p>The Directorate needs to recognise the different nature of site-based work compared to office based work when introducing plans to increase the workload of site-based staff.</p> <p>The Directorate needs to continue with on-going programmes to support staff well-being.</p>

Recommendations for consideration

1. The Directorate should create a Plain English summary of the 2012 consultation on Modernising Terms & Conditions and explain the decisions taken on weekend and overtime work.
2. The Directorate needs to complete recruiting to a number of vacant posts to ensure workload is not unreasonably high. The 2015/16 Service Plan should consider staff capacity issues.
3. The Directorate should be proactive in nominating good performing staff for Council Awards such as CREATE. Consideration should be made to develop a Directorate level award for deserving staff. Staff should be openly recognized for effort and good work.

5.0 LINE MANAGEMENT/ SUPERVISION

Responses	Clarification on responses obtained
<p>61 commented that they were happy with Line Managers whilst 11 said that they were not.</p> <p>21 commented that they were unsure on their reporting structure due to their team restructuring that has recently taken place.</p> <p>15 commented that they have benefited from working with their Manager who has good hands-on experience</p> <p>10 commented that they have faced problems when being</p>	<p>The Directorate needs to make all staff aware of their reporting structure and of the Directorate's organisation chart.</p>

5.0 LINE MANAGEMENT/ SUPERVISION	
Responses	Clarification on responses obtained
given conflicting instructions from different Line Managers.	
Recommendations for consideration	
1. The Directorate is to publish the ESD organisational chart and displayed it for staff. Service Teams are to ensure that all staff are aware of their line management reporting structure.	

6.0 SENIOR MANAGEMENT (ESD Director/ Service Manager)	
Responses	Clarification on responses obtained
71 commented that their team has no leadership/direction 55 commented that they have had not meetings with Senior Management 52 commented that Senior Management do not understand staff needs whilst 22 did 51 commented that they never see and/or trust Senior	The Directorate should demonstrate to staff that the current Senior Management team understand the Directorates work and responsibilities. The Directorate's strategy on employing Agency staff should be made transparent and be understood by permanent staff Senior Management are to make themselves more visible/

<p>Management</p> <p>34 commented that Agency staff are treated differently</p> <p>21 commented that they felt that the PRISM/ Towards Excellence did not deliver what it was expected to achieve</p>	<p>present at the depot more regularly.</p> <p>The Directorate should inform staff on progress of PRISM/Towards Excellence programme</p>
<p>Recommendations for consideration</p>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Directorate should roll-out a regular programme to communicate the Directorate’s Vision and key messages to small group face to face meetings with all staff. This would include providing information on what went well and what did not in the last period and on changes that will be introduced in the future. 2. The Directorate should be more transparent and open about recruitment including awareness of adverts and clarification of Agency staff roles; why they are taken on and for how long are the contracts are likely to last. This should include a summary of comparative costings and benefits e.g. Agency do not get paid leave, paid sick or LG Pension. 3. The Directorate will print out future job adverts in addition to the usual way of having them advertised for staff who do not have internet access. 4. A coordinated series of invites to visit teams will be extended to ESD Director and Portfolio Holder for staff to engage directly on topical issues. 	

7.0 EQUIPMENT & FACILITIES

Responses

Clarification on responses obtained

30 commented that the Bartec was not fully operational / provides inaccurate information

21 commented that Citrix/ computers is slow

55 commented that they were not provided with equipment/ tools to enable them to do their job effectively.

23 commented that they wanted better catering/ rest area at the depot

The Directorate should ensure that site-based staff are well equipped to undertake their work. This should meet H&S requirements for staff to undertake their work safely and comfortably.

Recommendations for consideration

1. The Directorate needs to ensure that all staff are aware of the tools/ equipment section process, the appointment of safety teams and the risk assessments undertaken.
2. The Directorate should demonstrate more visibly through line management and safety teams the appropriate allocation of tools and equipment, reviewing the process of allocating equipment/tools where necessary and ensuring that all staff are aware of the equipment request process and are obtaining them.
3. The Directorate will continue to press Corp IT that IT issues are promptly dealt with and inform staff on IT changes that would be introduced in the near future.
4. The Directorate should review the provision of staff welfare facilities including vending machines and furniture at the depot.

4. DELIVERY OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 The above recommendations have been combined into the 10 Point Action Plan below, showing the timescales for implementation and resource requirements including costs.

No	Recommendation	Timescale	Budget	Sponsor
1	<p>Decisions made by the Council should be clearly explained to staff. Although consultation responses are prepared, it seems that the format used is not lending itself to be accessible to all Depot based staff. Consideration should be given to providing responses in an appropriately summarised way and making sure that all staff including those without access to email have the opportunity to see the responses. This applies to Corporate as well as Service communications.</p> <p>The Directorate should create a Plain English summary of the 2012 consultation on Modernising Terms & Conditions and explain the decisions taken on weekend and overtime work, including the alternatives considered at the time.</p>	2014/15		ESD Director, Corp. Comms, Corp HR
2	<p>EE Staff Engagement Event to be held every 3 months at depot and Civic to enable staff to seek face to face feedback on Council decisions.</p> <p>The Directorate is to roll-out a regular programme to communicate the Directorate's Vision and key messages to small informal groups in face to face meetings. This would include providing information on what went well and what did not in the last period and on changes</p>	2014/15	£2000 annually	Corp Director, SMT Service Mgrs

	<p>that will be introduced in the future.</p> <p>A coordinated series of invites to visit service teams is to be extended to ESD Director and the Portfolio Holder for staff to engage directly on topical issues.</p>			
3	<p>The Directorate is to make better use of all communication channels to keep staff updated. This includes regular updating of the notice board at the depot by a dedicated member of staff, distributing leaflets to staff for any key messages and making better use of hand-held devices e.g. Bartec, mobile phones, PDAs to provide headlines on a weekly basis so that site staff can be informed by their line managers.</p> <p>The Directorate is to work with Corporate Communications to ensure that all communications / messages are conveyed in a timely manner to all ESD staff based at the depot. Simply stating: Please print for staff without email access is not satisfactory. The responsibility should be to check and ensure the messages are getting to staff. If necessary, simplified summary messages should be created for on-site staff which can be sent to handheld devices with details of where to go for further information.</p>	2014/15		ESD Director, Service Mgrs, Corporate Comms, ESD Director, Service Mgrs
4.	<p>All staff should be provided with computer access which is available for use during depot operation times. This can be through shared computers that are based at the Canteen or a secured alternative location. This can be used by staff to check for information and for information updates. Basic training to use the Hub will be required for some.</p> <p>Corp IT have confirmed that internet access can be made available but with no access to the Harrow Hub. Technical Services will maintain a folder of newsletters, policies, procedures etc. which can</p>	2015/16	£5000 + £1800/ annum	ESD Director Corp IT

	<p>be accessed online by staff.</p> <p>The Directorate will continue to press Corp IT for IT issues to be promptly dealt with and inform staff on IT changes that would be introduced in the near future. All staff should continue to be encouraged to continue logging issues with IT to ensure an accurate picture of problems can be addressed corporately.</p>			
5.	<p>The Directorate should introduce 'Appraisal Month' in May and October each year where all staff and managers are expected to prioritise Appraisal action. This will help raise awareness of the importance of Appraisals as part of the Directorate's staff development and well-being culture. This is to be accompanied by a high profile, awareness campaign.</p> <p>Appraisal training needs to be rebranded as a core component of work and responsibility for all staff with supervision responsibility in the Directorate, particularly in ESD. A Directorate-wide programme should be rolled-out to actively inform staff on the Appraisal process and what they should expect from it.</p> <p>The Directorate should appoint an Appraisal Champion for ESD who has responsibility to promote Appraisal Month and undertake monitoring of effectiveness of Appraisals delivered by services including review of group Appraisals and ensuring training needs are being captured.</p> <p>All ESD staff who have Appraisal responsibility should undergo tailored specific training to effectively deliver Appraisals. This training should include recognising and rewarding staff and customizing the process depending on the target group.</p>	2015/16		ESD Director, Service Mgrs, Line Mgrs

6.	<p>The Directorate should regularly update the Learning & Development Plan and ensure that a training register is kept which should be accessible to all staff. Staff should be provided the opportunity to put forward recommendations for training and development for consideration by the Directorate. Staff should be informed on the process of applying for training and this form an integral part of the Appraisal. The L&D Plan and register should be on hand during Appraisals and updated and republished at least every April and June before and after Appraisals.</p> <p>Managers should be given the option of flexibility to determine how to best deliver the Appraisals depending on circumstance but they must ensure staff are fully aware that they are undergoing formal Appraisal.</p> <p>The Policy and Performance Team will be responsible for monitoring, collating and chasing up Appraisals.</p>	2014/15		<p>ESD Director, Service Mgrs</p> <p>Policy & Performance</p>
7.	<p>The Directorate is to publish the ESD organisational chart and to have it displayed for staff. Service Teams are to ensure that all staff are aware of their reporting structure.</p> <p>The Directorate needs to complete recruiting to a number of vacant posts to ensure workload is not unreasonably high. The 2015/16 Service Plan should consider staff capacity issues.</p> <p>The Directorate should communicate more strongly the fair, transparent and open nature of recruitment including awareness of adverts. The role of Agency staff should be clarified including why they are taken on, expected contracts duration and include a summary of agency costings and benefits to remove misconceptions e.g. Agency do not get paid leave, paid sick or LG Pension.</p>	2014/15		<p>Corp HR, ESD Director, Service Mgrs.</p>

	The Directorate will print out future job adverts and put them on notice boards in addition to the corporate methods of publicising vacancies.			
8.	The Directorate should encourage Managers to be proactive in nominating good performing staff for Council Awards such as CREATE. Consideration should be made to develop a Directorate level award for deserving staff. Staff should be openly recognized for effort and good work.	2014/15		ESD Director, Service Mgrs
9.	<p>The Directorate needs to ensure that all staff are aware of the tools / equipment selection process, the appointment of safety teams and risk assessments that have been undertaken.</p> <p>The Directorate should demonstrate more visibly through line management and safety teams the appropriate allocation of tools and equipment, reviewing the process of allocating equipment/tools where necessary and ensuring that all staff are aware of the equipment request process and are obtaining them.</p>	2015/16		ESD Director, Service Mgrs
10.	The Directorate should review the provision of staff welfare facilities including vending machines in the canteen and furniture at the depot.	2014/15	Tbc	ESD Director